

43. (One time amended)

A thermoforming apparatus comprising:

a thermoforming machine fitted with at least one female die; and

extraction pick-up means adapted to withdraw a thermoformed article from the female die and to transfer it to a receiving station, said extraction pick-up means including a receiving hole for each thermoformed article to be extracted, each receiving hole being defined along its depth by two annular surfaces reamed in opposite directions and defining between them an equatorial shoulder for engaging and positioning each thermoformed article,

wherein the thermoforming machine is fitted with at least one counter-die, the at least one female die and counter-die being reciprocally approachable and removable for the operations of closing, thermoforming and opening,

the apparatus further comprising a feeder for feeding thermoforming material between each female die and counter-die, and

wherein the receiving station is a receiving conveying template including retention surfaces adapted to engage each thermoformed article, at least one surface of said retention surfaces being defined by at least a portion of a wall of a cavity in an element associated with the conveying template, the cavity communicating with at least one exterior surface of the element and having an interior dimension which is smallest in a region remote from said exterior surface to define a shoulder thereat for resiliently holding a thermoformed article disposed in the cavity.